



PRESERVATION VIRGINIA

5 July 2023

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
United States Senate
730 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Sarbanes
U.S. House of Representatives
2370 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Chesapeake National Recreation Area

Dear Senator Van Hollen and Representative Sarbanes:

On behalf of Preservation Virginia, I am writing to thank you for your leadership to create the Chesapeake National Recreation Area (CNRA), a new unit of the National Park System in the Chesapeake watershed. We strongly support the establishment of this new national recreation area, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that the Chesapeake is recognized for its natural and historic significance by inclusion in the National Park System.

Preservation Virginia is the nation's first statewide historic preservation organization with members, partners and allies across the Commonwealth. During our 134 year history, we have helped save more than 500 historic places. Our annual Most Endangered list highlights opportunities to preserve historic places. Included in this year's listing were the historic resources associated with the African American Waterman in the Chesapeake region. We championed the establishment of the Fort Monroe National Monument. At Historic Jamestowne, we own the 22 acres where the archaeological remains of 1607 James Fort were found and have jointly managed the Island with the National Park Service for more than 80 years.

The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure. Over the millennium, the abundance and beauty of the Chesapeake Bay has beckoned people to settle in this region and chart our American story. The diversity of the ecosystems with its tributaries, wetlands and forests offers nourishment to the body and soul. And now because of your support, there is an opportunity to connect the history and culture of the region and preserve it for future generations with the creation of the CNRA.

CNRA is a big idea whose time has come. The Chesapeake Bay watershed is a natural wonder fully deserving of national park status. Preservation Virginia joins the growing coalition of preservation, conservation, recreational and environmental organizations in Virginia and Maryland to support this effort.

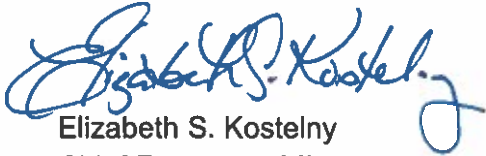
PRESERVATION VIRGINIA
204 West Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia 23220-5012
preservationvirginia.org 804-648-1889

Sustaining historic places through advocacy, education, revitalization and stewardship.

Establishing the CNRA will raise awareness to connect the historical, cultural, recreational and environmental sites in new and innovative ways. Through collaboration and cooperation, more people will be motivated to learn this history and the nationally significant resources of the Bay watershed.

Thank you once again for leading this important initiative. We look forward to working with you on bill introduction and final passage to establish this new national recreation area in the Chesapeake.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth S. Kostelny", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Elizabeth S. Kostelny
Chief Executive Officer

cc: The Honorable Mark Warner
The Honorable Tim Kaine
The Honorable Bobby Scott
The Honorable Ben Cardin